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AUTHOR	Stairs, Susan
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ABSTRACT

Two issues relating to the library resources and services required by the National Institute of Education (NIE) are discussed. The first section of the paper examines the two major alternatives available to NIE for accessing library resources and services, namely: 1) to establish a NIE Reference Branch under the jurisdiction of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare Library, or 2) to create an autonomous NIE Library or a National Library of Education under NIE's jurisdiction. The advantages and disadvantages of each are reviewed. The second section of the paper offers some guidelines for the development of a comprehensive archival system for NIE. Cataloging procedures and staffing requirements are included within the scope of the discussion. (PB)

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LIBRARY AND ARCHIVAL NEEDS FOR NIE

As an agency committed to restructuring and reforming education in this country, the NIE researchers and staff will require prompt access to a vast collection of reference and resource materials dealing with past and current developments in the field of education. Therefore, two important concerns in planning for the NIE are the establishment of:

(1) Procedures to provide the agency with access to needed library resources and materials, and

(2) Systematic procedures for collecting, storing, and retrieving archival materials related to NIE's operation

If NIE is to be responsive to the reference needs of its staff, it must have access to the resources and services of an educational research library. The NIE library must provide to NIE staff a wide selection of educational resource materials as well as essential reference and bibliographic services. The fact that a good portion of NIE research will be performed in-house will enhance the need for the special services and features offered by a research library.

A comprehensive archives documenting the history of NIE and serving as a central file for all non-active information on NIE activities will also be an important feature of the agency. In performing its research and development activities, the NIE will generate multitudes of documents which must be collected and stored in such a manner that they can be easily retrieved. Therefore, the NIE archives, in addition to housing

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historical NIE documents, must also function as a repository for information on NIE projects, at least until such time as an agency information processing system can be developed.

The first section of this paper will examine some of the alternatives available to NIE for accessing library resources and services. The second section will offer guidelines for the development of a comprehensive archival system for NIE.

Alternative Ways by Which NIE Might Access Library Resources and Services

The two alternatives open to NIE for accessing library services and resources are:

(1) To establish an NIE Reference Branch under the jurisdiction of the HEW library, and

(2) To create an autonomous NIE Library or a National Library of Education under NIE's jurisdiction.

Although the second of these options would be more advantageous to NIE, time limitations, financial considerations, and other restrictions may inhibit NIE from seeking authority to establish an independent library, at least during the first three to five years of operation. However, as NIE reaches maturity and expands its staff to several hundred employees, it must develop plans for the creation of a comprehensive educational research library.

Alternative 1: Establishment of NIE Reference Branch

As an agency reporting to the Secretary of HEW, NIE will be afforded those privileges and services provided by the Department to the various

agencies under its jurisdiction. As has been the case with OE and several other HEW agencies, NIE will be authorized to organize its own HEW branch collection.

Should NIE decide to organize its own reference branch, there are many lessons to be learned and pitfalls to be avoided from a close examination of the regulations and restrictions which govern the operation of the OE branch collection. The shortcomings inherent in the operation of the OE branch will be discussed below and will be followed by suggestions as to how NIE might avoid some of these shortcomings.

The OE branch set up in 1964 by the HEW Library education specialist was never intended to be a research library. It was assumed the OE staff in need of research materials and reference services could always utilize the HEW Library located across the street.

The purpose of the OE branch is to provide to OE staff a collection of the most commonly used reference tools (directories, dictionaries, encyclopedias, guides to literature, etc.), a wide range of the most frequently sought after educational periodicals, and a rotating selection of the latest publications in the field of education. The OE branch never contains more than five hundred titles on its shelves at one time; new books are constantly added to the OE collection as other books are withdrawn and returned to the HEW Library. All selection, procurement, and processing of books slated for the OE branch is carried out in the HEW Library. Requests for books not available in the OE branch are directed to the HEW Library.

The OE branch librarian, who is not an education specialist nor a reference librarian, reports to the HEW Library administration. All requests for reference and bibliographic services must be directed to HEW reference librarians.

Numerous bureaucratic regulations and requirements have inhibited the OE branch from operating in an efficient manner. Because of lengthy procurement procedures and slow processing used by the HEW Library, it is often three months before a new publication is available for circulation in the OE branch. The OE branch does not have its own revolving fund for local purchase of new publications; consequently, OE staff must wait until a requested publication is ready for circulation.

The HEW Library offers an inter-library loan service to all Department employees; however, the advantages of this service are minimal because of the long delay, often three weeks or more, involved in obtaining publications from other libraries in the Washington area.

The inefficiency inherent in the operation of the OE branch will be present in the NIE branch operation unless some methods can be devised for avoiding it. To insure that the NIE branch will be responsive to the needs of NIE staff, the following strategy is recommended as plans for the establishment of the branch library get underway.

When and if it becomes apparent that NIE will be authorized to set up its own branch library, the agency should acquire the services of a librarian familiar with government regulations and with the work of R&D agencies to oversee the establishment of the branch. A librarian

with such expertise would be in a better position to advocate for the NIE branch those operational procedures compatible with NIE's needs, and to safeguard the branch from the bureaucratic regulations which inhibit the OE branch operation.

If a decision is made to establish an NIE branch library, a person familiar with current educational theory and practice should be put in charge of managing the branch, preferably an education specialist. An education specialist would be qualified to select for the branch those books and journals needed by an educational R&D agency.

The NIE branch should also request the services of one or more (depending on need) reference librarians to fill requests for reference and bibliographic services. The reference librarian's sole responsibility would be to keep track of new publications in the field of education and to do literature searches for those in need of such services. A desk librarian (paraprofessional) should also be available in the NIE branch to assist in locating requested books, and for overseeing the circulation of books.

To negate the long delays involved in accessing new publications from the HEW Library, it is essential that the NIE branch have a revolving fund for immediate purchase of important new publications and other necessary material. Another way by which NIE might eschew HEW Library regulations in procuring materials is to include in the budget set aside for a particular project an amount of money to be used in the purchase of research materials needed by the project staff. The materials purchased through this plan would be inventoried as part of the NIE

library, and loaned to the project staff. At the conclusion of the project, the materials would be returned to the NIE library.

Lastly, it is essential that when facilities for NIE offices are selected, enough space be available for housing an NIE library and for accommodating staff who may choose to do much of their work in the branch library.

Alternative 2: Creation of an Autonomous NIE Library

The second and most advantageous alternative for NIE in its quest for library resources and services is the creation of an autonomous NIE library. An undertaking of this magnitude will require authorization either by an act of Congress or by executive order.*

In the case that NIE decides that it will seek such authorization, some important insights might be gleaned from the experience of NIH, which maintains two research libraries, both of which are independent of the HEW Library administration.

NIH has its own in-house research library which is under the Division of Research Sciences of the Institute. This library contains scientific collections selected to support laboratory investigations and programs in the biomedical and related sciences conducted by NIH; its use is limited to NIH staff.

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* With the exception of the Library of Congress, the National Library of Medicine, and the Public Library of the District of Columbia, most federal libraries have not been created as a result of legislative statute. In general, federal libraries have been established by executive order, or by special administrative regulations issued on the departmental level by a commission, bureau, or other component of an agency. See pp. 1 and 2 Guide to Laws and Regulations on Federal Libraries.

The National Library of Medicine which also reports to the NIH Director is a federal Library open to NIH staff as well as the nation's medical community. It performs many services essential to the collection, dissemination and exchange of medical information which includes publication of indexes, catalogs and bibliographies; providing support for medical library development and for training of medical librarians and providing technical consultation services. and research assistance.* As a result of its role as a national medical information resource, the National Library of Medicine has provided great visibility and prestige to NIH as well as to the study of medicine in general.

At present there is no federal education library in this country. The creation of a national library responsible for the collection, dissemination and exchange of educational information should be considered by NIE for several reasons. Such a library would serve as a resource for NIE researchers and staff. Secondly, it would assist NIE in its efforts to collect and disseminate the results of educational research. Finally, a National Library of Education would provide needed prestige and visibility to the study of education and to the work of NIE.

The creation of a National Library of Education will require a major planning effort on the part of a number of specialists in the

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* A more detailed discussion of the organization and functions of the National Library of Medicine can be found in the Guide to Laws and Regulations on Federal Libraries, pp. 711 and 712.

fields of library organization and educational research. It should be emphasized here that if NIE anticipates that such an undertaking is necessary, planning should begin immediately.

An option which NIE might consider if it decides to set up a National Library of Education is to request that the HEW Library's Education Collection be transferred to NIE. The HEW Library contains the best collection of educational resource materials in the country according to the HEW Library Education Specialist, Alice Soonge. This collection of educational resources comprising over fifty percent of the titles in the HEW Library was begun in 1948 as the U.S. Office of Education Library, and was transferred intact to the HEW Library in 1964 when the Office of Education became an agency of HEW. Since that time it has been constantly updated and watched over by Miss Soonge.

This proposal is based on the logical assumption that a resource of this caliber should be available to those who will make the most use of it. The fact that the HEW Library is understaffed and short of space should enhance NIE's prospects for implementing this plan.

In conclusion, it is quite possible that the location of NIE offices, as yet unknown, may influence to some degree the way in which NIE is to access library resources and services. If NIE is located near the HEW complex, it appears feasible that an NIE branch library will suffice, at least in the short run. Proximity to HEW will facilitate access to those facilities, resources and services offered by the HEW Library.

If, however, NIE is located some distance from the HEW complex, it is advisable that NIE plans include the development of its own autonomous library.

Guidelines for the Development of a Comprehensive Archival System for NIE

An archives documenting the history of NIE and serving as a central file for all past and current information on NIE activities is essential to the operation of the agency.. For the first few years of NIE's existence, the purpose of the archives will be two-fold: it will function as a repository for all historical NIE documents, and it must also substitute as a central source for information on all past and current NIE projects until such time as NIE can develop its own management information system for both active and archival materials.

As a function of the planning process, it was necessary to develop procedures for cataloguing NIE documents. The archival procedure established operates on the accession number principle. Documents are catalogued according to subject and receive an accession number from the series designated for that subject heading. Subject headings will correspond to the various NIE divisions, and will be further broken down to correspond to the work being performed in these divisions. Catalogued documents are cross indexed by title, author and accession number.

Information on past and on-going NIE programs will be classified according to the system described above. This systematic classification of NIE projects will facilitate the transfer of this material to the future NIE computerized management information system. The initial plans for this system have been described in an earlier NIE Planning Unit document written by John Hayman entitled Management Information Issues and Needs for the National Institute of Education. The archives will also serve as a central source of information on NIE projects for use by NIE staff and others in the field who may need information on past and current NIE activities.

As NIE grows, a full time archivist will be required to catalogue documents and to retrieve requested information. The archivist will also be in charge of collecting information for the archives from the various NIE division heads and/or project monitors. In order to keep the archives current, it will be necessary for the archivist to consult with these people frequently.

The NIE archives must be located within the NIE offices. If NIE is authorized, a likely location for the NIE archives would be the NIE library. A system of rules and regulations regulating the use of the materials in the archives must be developed.

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